



The State of New Hampshire  
**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES**

Thomas S. Burack, Commissioner



March 6, 2007

Representative James G. Phinizy, Chairman  
Environment and Agriculture Committee  
Legislative Office Building, Room 303  
Concord, NH 03301

**Subject: HB 924-FN, an act relative to the deconstruction of buildings**

Dear Chairman Phinizy and Members of the Committee:

HB 924-FN seeks to require, if cost effective, a reuse/recycling rate of 75% for construction/deconstruction projects funded in whole or in part by state funds. The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (DES) supports this bill.

Deconstruction is an alternative to traditional building remodeling/demolition that can yield economic and environmental benefits. In many cases, deconstruction can cost less than demolition because of the value of salvaged materials and avoidance of demolition debris disposal costs. Deconstruction contractors may also realize federal tax benefits when they donate salvaged materials to groups such as Habitat for Humanity. Deconstruction has been shown to divert up to 90% of a building into reuse and recycling, thus conserving natural resources and preserving landfill capacity for non-recyclable waste.

The State of Vermont is a regional leader in promoting deconstruction. It has established a Vermont Construction Site Reuse and Recycling Directory, which lists markets for reusable or recyclable construction and demolition materials. The Vermont Business Materials Exchange has also been established as a free service to match companies with excess building goods with companies that can use the materials. These efforts, along with promotional information on the state website, actively encourage the practice of deconstruction. Should HB 924-FN be passed into law, DES will work with stakeholders to create helpful deconstruction data bases and exchanges based on the Vermont model.

The committee should be aware that HB 428 would amend RSA 149-M:4 by inserting the definition of construction and demolition debris at paragraph IV-a, which is the section that HB 924-FN identifies as proposed new definition of deconstruction. The definition of deconstruction could be inserted at RSA 149-M:4, paragraph IV-b to avoid this conflict.

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DES appreciates the opportunity to support this bill. If you have any questions regarding this letter of testimony, please do not hesitate to call me at 271-2958 or Waste Management Division Director Tony Giunta, P.G. at 271-2905.

Sincerely,

  
for Thomas S. Burack  
Commissioner

cc: Rep. Derek Owen